

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

April 6, 2004 LB 1083, 1145

SENATOR CUDABACK: You've heard the motion to adopt the E & R amendments to LB 1083. All in favor of the motion say aye. Opposed to the motion say nay. They are adopted.

CLERK: Senator Byars would move to amend, AM3443. (Legislative Journal page 1354.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Byars, to open on your amendment, AM3443.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. President. AM3443 was LB 1145, which was introduced on behalf of Nebraska Health and Human Services Commission (sic), and it was advanced by unanimous vote to General File by the Health and Human Services Committee. This was a bill that implements the recommendations of a 407 credentialing review that was composed of certified alcohol and drug abuse counselors, who we refer to as CADAC. It was conducted under the regulation of the Health Professions Act. The review was done at the request of the Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee, Senator Jensen, and the director of Regulation and Licensure, Dick Nelson of Health and Human Services. The purposes of the amendment are to establish a procedure for mandatory licensing of alcoholism and drug abuse counselors, and that replaces the voluntary certification program that we have at this point. This is something that those counselors felt was needed themselves and brought to the department. It places licensure within the uniform license law, and it provides qualifications for the provisional licensure of counselors. It places administration of the licensure program within the Department of Health and Human Services, Regulation and Licensure; places the scope of practice and disciplinary authority relating to the practice of alcoholism and drug abuse counseling in state statute; and it clarifies the authority of the alcoholism and drug abuse counselors to screen patients for mental illness and require those patients suspected of needing mental health services to be referred to a mental health professional. I want to clarify that this clinical evaluation does not include mental health assessment or treatment. An alcohol and drug counselor, through, must refer persons with co-occurring mental disorders, unless the person is under the care of or has been previously assessed and diagnosed by an